

## Adapting to Survive

**Cross-Curricular Focus: Life Science**



Living things adapt to their environment so they can **survive**. An organism **adapts** when it develops a **behavior** that makes it more likely to survive. It can also adapt by forming a physical characteristic or body part that helps it survive.

In a forest biome, some trees grow taller than the other plants around them. This lets them reach the sunlight. Growing taller is an adaptation that helps trees survive. Shorter plants have adapted with their behavior. They have learned to live in the shade with less sunlight.

Animals in the forest have a wide variety of adaptations. Monkeys have long tails. They can use them almost like another hand. This helps them swing quickly through the tops of trees. They can even do this while holding their babies or gathering food. Giraffes need to reach leaves at the tops of tall trees. Having a long neck is an adaptation that allows them to do this.

Some animals' adaptations prevent other animals from wanting to eat them. A skunk's horrible smell makes larger animals choose something else to eat. Even plants sometimes protect themselves in this way. Roses and acacia trees both have dangerous thorns. The thorns prevent animals from eating their leaves.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

1) What are the two main ways that an organism adapts?

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2) What is one animal adaptation you read about in the passage?

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3) Is the animal adaptation you chose a physical or behavioral adaptation?

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4) What is one plant adaptation you read about in the passage?

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5) Is the plant adaptation you chose a physical or behavioral adaptation?

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Name: Key

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

**Actual answers may vary.**

1) What are the two main ways that an organism adapts?

**by changing its behavior or its physical characteristics**

2) What is one animal adaptation you read about in the passage?

**a monkey's tail or a giraffe's neck or a skunk's smell**

3) Is the animal adaptation you chose a physical or behavioral adaptation?

**trees grow tall or short plants learn to live with**

**less sunlight or roses and acacia trees grow thorns**

4) What is one plant adaptation you read about in the passage?

**trees - physical; short plants - behavioral; roses and**

**acacia trees - physical**

5) Is the plant adaptation you chose a physical or behavioral adaptation?

**Student's choice**